(d) by when the said proposal would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN) : (a) to (d) The proposal to start Foreign Currency Exchange Facility from post offices is at a preliminary stage and no details have been finalized. The final decision in this regard would be taken by Government of India after proper evaluation of operational and commercial parameters. Such a scheme, if introduced, would increase the number of legitimate outlets available to the customers for buying and selling foreign exchange.

Storage of foodgrains by private contractors

1681. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that foodgrains are being stored with private contractors as FCI godowns were overflowing; and

(b) the reasons for which the excess food stocks are not being distributed to the States as part of the Food for Work Programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) Private godowns are hired by FCI on a small scale, depending upon the storage capacity available with the FCI and the trends of procurement and off-take in the procuring/consuming States. Hiring/dehiring of godowns is reviewed in this context from time to time.

(b) The Government has been making allotment of foodgrains under Food for Work Programme with effect from January, 2001 in favour of the flood/draught affected States. During the year 2002-03, the Food for Work Programme has been merged with Sampooran Gramin Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) as a Special Component.

During the year 2002-03 (upto 29.11.2002), the Government has allotted a total of 10.82 lakh tonnes of wheat and 27.47 lakh tonnes of rice to the States under Special component of Sampooran Gramin Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) against which 2.37 lakh tonnes of wheat and 22.37 lakh tonnes of rice has been lifted.